

a spring washer axially outward of the two thrust races for engaging a support surface and for applying a preload to a first of the two thrust races; and

retention means for retaining the two thrust races, the rolling elements and the spring washer together as an assembly to facilitate handling and installation and wherein the two thrust races, the rolling elements and the spring washer are configured to have zero axial clearance within the retention means, prior to installation of the thrust bearing assembly, such that damage from vibration during handling is reduced.

10.(Amended) A thrust bearing assembly comprising:

two thrust races;

a plurality of rolling elements between and against the two thrust races, for supporting relative rotation of the thrust races about a common axis;

a spring washer axially outward of the two thrust races for engaging a support surface and for applying a preload to a first of the two thrust races; and

retention means for retaining the two thrust races, the rolling elements and the spring washer together as an assembly to facilitate handling and installation and wherein a first of the thrust races has an outer diameter smaller than the outer diameter of a second of the thrust races, to facilitate flow of lubricant, and wherein the first thrust race has an inner diameter smaller than the inner diameter of the second thrust race, to facilitate flow of lubricant.